

1. Teaching Meditation to Pre-School Children

I got a chance to teach meditation to several pre-school children (4-6 years old) in Czech Republic. My friend then asked me to write a summary of the way that I taught them. See below for a summary and a detailed example of what a session may look like. During the second session I have realized that the key to gain the children's attention is to teach them by small groups, possibly by three, or max. four at once. As soon as there are more than three or four, the teacher might lose the attention of some children while he/she pays attention to another child. Also, in an irreligious and multireligious environments it is the unavoidable requirement to get written permission from the parents of each and every child for teaching them Buddhist meditation, and possibly show the parents the text of the procedure (e.g. the one presented below) before the first session. This time I wasn't super-strict, and there were complaints. To prevent further complaints from the parents, my next invitation to teach the children was cancelled.

Summary:

1. The teacher will explain how morality and meditation lead to happiness and satisfaction.
2. The teacher then explains the four precepts (i.e. the five precepts without the third) as the basis for happiness, satisfaction, and successful meditation.
3. Thereafter the teacher explains the three kinds of meditation (calm, observing body, observing mind), and the meaning of what is body and mind.
4. The teacher then leads the children to see that their breath moves from nostrils to the belly, and that the belly rises and falls according to the breath.
5. When the children understand what to observe, they meditate together with the teacher for five minutes.
6. The teacher then leads the children to show their gratitude to the Buddha for the instructions.

An example how it may look like, word by word

Who	English	Czech
Teacher	Would you like to be happy and satisfied?	Chtěli byste být šťastní a spokojení?
Children	Yes.	Ano.
Teacher	The Buddha explained, that morality and meditation can help us to be happy and satisfied.	Buddha vysvětlil, že etika a meditace nám mohou pomoci abychom byli šťastní a spokojení.
	So, why do we meditate?	Takže, proč meditujeme?
Children	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	In order to be happy and satisfied.	Abychom byli šťastní a spokojení.
	So, why do we meditate?	Takže, proč meditujeme?
Children	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	In order to be happy and satisfied.	Abychom byli šťastní a spokojení.
	So, why do we meditate?	Takže, proč meditujeme?
Children	In order to be happy and satisfied	Abychom byli šťastní a spokojení.
(I have learned, that the question has to be repeated three or more times, because the children need some time to realize that they are asked a question, and that they can use the answer revealed to them by the teacher.)		
Teacher	But first we need to have basic happiness and satisfaction before we start to meditate.	Ale nejdřív musíme být spokojení a šťastní na základní úrovni, abychom vůbec byli schopní medítovat.
(Teacher asks a child no.1)	If you kill somebody, will you be happy and satisfied?	Když někoho zabiješ, budeš šťastný/šťastná a spokojený/spokojená?
Child no.1	No.	Ne.
(All children knew, that they wouldn't be happy and satisfied if they killed, stole, told a lie, or drank alcohol. If it happens that they think otherwise, the teacher just has to correct them.)		
Teacher	Why?	Proč?

Child no.1	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Because later you will regret it.	Protože ti to později bude líto.
	Therefore, we never kill any living being. We cherish life. If we cherish life, we will be happier and more satisfied.	Proto nikdy nezabíjíme žádnou živou bytost. Ctíme život. Pokud si vážíme života, budeme šťastnější a spokojenější.
(Teacher asks a child no.2)	If you steal something from somebody, will you be happy and satisfied?	Když někomu něco ukradneš, budeš šťastný/šťastná a spokojený/spokojená?
Child no.2	No.	Ne.
Teacher	Why?	Proč?
Child no.2	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Because later you will regret it.	Protože ti to později bude líto.
	Therefore, we never steal anything from anybody. We cherish other's possession. If we cherish other's possession, we will be happier and more satisfied.	Proto nikdy nikomu nic nekrademe. Ctíme majetek druhých. Pokud ctíme majetek druhých, tak budeme šťastnější a spokojenější.
(Teacher asks a child no.3)	If you tell a lie, will you be happy and satisfied?	Když někomu zalžeš, budeš šťastný/šťastná a spokojený/spokojená?
Child no.3	No.	Ne.
Teacher	Why?	Proč?
Child no.3	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Because later you will regret it.	Protože ti to později bude líto.
(Teacher asks a child.)	If somebody tells you a lie, will you later believe them?	Když ti někdo zalže, budeš mu potom věřit?
Child	No.	Ne.
Teacher	Do you want others to believe you?	Chceš aby ti ostatní věřili?
Child	Yes.	Ano.
Teacher	Therefore, you should never tell a lie. If you never tell a lie, others will believe you.	Proto nesmíš nikdy lhát. Pokud nikdy nezalžeš, ostatní ti budou věřit.
	Therefore, we never tell a lie. We cherish speaking truth. If we cherish speaking truth, we will be happier and more satisfied.	Proto nikdy nelžeme. Ctíme pravdu. Pokud ctíme pravdu, tak budeme šťastnější a spokojenější.
(Teacher asks a child no.4)	If you drink alcohol or take drugs, will you be happy and satisfied?	Když budeš pít alkohol nebo brát drogy, budeš šťastný/šťastná a spokojený/spokojená?
Child no.4	No.	Ne.
Teacher	Why?	Proč?
Child no.4	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Because later you will regret it.	Protože ti to později bude líto.
	Therefore, we never drink alcohol, we never take drugs. We cherish fresh and intelligent mind. If we cherish fresh and intelligent mind, we will be happier and more satisfied.	Proto, nikdy nepijeme alkohol, nikdy nebereme drogy. Ctíme čerstvou a inteligentní mysl. Pokud ctíme čerstvou a inteligentní mysl, budeme šťastnější a spokojenější.
	So, there are these four rules that we follow carefully, to be happy and satisfied:	Takže máme tahle čtyři pravidla, která následujeme abychom byli šťastní a spokojení:
	One, we never kill any living being. Two, we never steal. Three, we never tell a lie. Four, we never drink alcohol or take drugs.	Jedna, nikdy nezabíjíme žádnou bytost. Dva, nikdy nekrademe. Tři, nikdy nezalžeme. Čtyři, nikdy nepijeme alkohol a nebereme drogy.
	If we follow these four rules, we will be happier and more satisfied.	Pokud následujeme tahle čtyři pravidla, budeme šťastnější a spokojenější.
	And if we are happy and satisfied, it is easy to meditate.	A pokud jsme šťastní a spokojení, tak je snadné meditovat.
	There are three kinds of meditation – meditation on calm, meditation on body, meditation on mind.	Máme tři druhy meditace – meditace na klid, meditace na tělo, a meditace na mysl.
	If we meditate, we calm down, and then observe the reality as it is.	Pokud meditujeme, uklidníme se, a pak pozorujeme skutečnost takovou jaká je.
The teacher asks a child.)	What is body?	Co je to tělo?
Child	Here. Here.	Tady. Tady.
(Children usually understand what is "body". They will point by their hands to different parts of their body. If they don't, the teacher points to the different parts of the child's body and asks them how are those parts called.)		

Teacher	What do you call that?	Jak se tomu říká?
Child	Hands. Belly.	Ruce. Břicho.
Teacher	Very well! This is body.	Výborně! To je tělo.
	What is mind?	Co je to mysl?
Children	I don't know.	Nevím.
(Mind is a very abstract term, so children will not know what that means. They may point to the brain. The teacher should explain to them that the brain is the place where the mind arises, not the mind itself.)		
Teacher	Mind is what is thinking. Mind works because of this body. Mind is dependent on this body.	Mysl je to, co myslí. Mysl funguje kvůli tomuto tělu. Mysl je závislá na tomto těle.
	If you have no hands, no head, no belly, no legs. Can you still have a mind?	Když nebudeš mít ruce, hlavu, břicho, a nohy.. je možné abyste měli pořád mysl?
Children	No.	Ne.
Teacher	Very well! That is because mind cannot exist without this body.	Výborně! To je protože mysl nemůže existovat bez tohoto těla.
	When we meditate, we observe the body and the mind as they really are. We do not delude ourselves in any way. We accept our body and mind as they truly are.	Když meditujeme, pozorujeme tělo a mysl tak, jak skutečně jsou. Nic si nenamlouváme. Přijímáme svoje tělo a mysl tak, jak skutečně jsou.
	First, let's observe the body.	Nejprve, pozorujeme tělo.
(It will be difficult for pre-school children to observe their mind, because that concept is too abstract. It is therefore suitable to teach them observing the body only, and perhaps in later years explain them meditation on the mind.)		
	We will observe the body by watching our breath.	Budeme pozorovat naše tělo díváním se na svůj dech.
(The teacher asks a child)	Where do you breathe?	Kde dýcháš?
Child	Here.	Tady.
(The child will point to his/her nose.)		
Teacher	What do you call that?	Jak se tomu říká?
Child	Nose.	Nos.
Teacher	After the air enters the nose, where does it go?	Po tom co vzduch vejde do nosu, kam pokračuje?
Child	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Breathe in strongly and watch it.	Pořádně se nadechni a pozoruj ho.
	Where does the air go after it enters the nose?	Kam ten vzduch pokračuje po tom co vstoupí do nosu?
Child	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Come, place your hand on your belly. What happens there?	Podívej, dej si ruku na břicho. Co se s ním děje?
(At this point the teacher also places his hand on his belly, and asks all the children do the same thing.)		
Teacher	So, what happens with the belly?	Tak, co se děje s břichem?
Children	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Breathe strongly and watch the belly.	Dýchejte pořádně a pozorujte břicho.
	So, what happens with the belly?	Tak co se děje s břichem?
Children	Up and down.	Nahoru a dolů.
Teacher	Excellent! The belly goes up and down! We say that it rises and falls.	Výborně! Břicho jde nahoru a dolů. Říkáme, že se zvedá a klesá.
(The teacher asks a child.)	Why does the body rise?	Proč se břicho zvedá?
Child	I don't know.	Nevím.
Teacher	Breathe strongly and watch it.	Dýchej pořádně a dívej se.
	What did you do before the belly rose?	Co jsi udělal než se břicho zvedlo?
Child	I breathed in.	Nadechl jsem se.
Teacher	Great! So, why does the belly rise?	Výborně! Tak proč se tělo zvedá?
Child	Because I breathe in.	Protože se nadechuji.
(Teacher asks another child.)	Excellent! Well then, why does the belly fall?	Výborně! No, a proč břicho klesá?
Child	Because I breathe out.	Protože vydechuji.
Teacher	Brilliant! The belly rises when we breathe in, and it falls when we breathe out.	Výborně! Břicho se zvedá když se nadechujeme, a klesá když vydechujeme.
	Very well, let's watch the belly and check whether it really goes up and down.	Výborně, pojďme pozorovat břicho a zkontrolujeme jestli opravdu jde nahoru a dolů.

	Sit in a comfortable way. Cross our legs, straighten your back (/keep your back erect), put one hand on the other, and place them on your lap. Then look at the ground in front of you and keep your eyes open.	Sedněte si pohodlně. Zkřížte nohy, narovnejte záda, dejte si jednu ruku na druhou, a položte je do klína. Pak se podívejte na zem před sebou a nechte oči otevřené.
(At this point the teacher does the same thing, and carefully checks the children, correcting them whenever they do something different.)		
	So, from now on for ten minutes we will watch the belly. We will stay without any movement, completely calm.	Tak, od teď budeme pozorovat svoje břicho deset minut. Vůbec se nebudeme hýbat, úplně v klidu.
(Some of the children will follow the example of the teacher and without movement observe their belly whole ten minutes. Some of the children might talk, or make various movements. That should be entirely ignored by the teacher. If it is done correctly, during the time of the ten minutes all children will be observing their belly without any talking, without any movement.)		
(When the ten minutes finished.)	Great. So now the ten minutes for meditation have finished. Mindfully change into a different sitting posture.	Výborně. Už jsme meditovali deset minut. Všímací si sedněte do jiné sedící pozice.
	The Buddha taught us how to be happy and satisfied. Therefore, we are thankful to Him.	Buddha nás učil jak být šťastní a spokojení. Proto jsme mu vděční.
	We thank the Buddha by bowing down, and by speech.	Děkujeme Buddhovi poklonou, a slovem.
(Now the teacher kneels, facing (directing his bowing toward) his left or right side, and asks all the children to kneel.)		
	When I thank the Buddha, I touch the ground by five points. The forehead, the two palms, and the two elbows.	Když děkuji Buddhovi, dotýkám se země pěti body. Čelem, oběma dlaněmi, a oběma lokty.
	Look at me!	Koukejte se na mě!
(The teacher then bows down in the way he/she described. If the children follow, he lets them follow. If they don't follow, he doesn't force them. It is alright if they don't follow. Note that bowing here is an expression of gratitude and it should have no influence on one's religious conviction. It is equivalent to the Czech manner of lowering one's head a little and saying "děkuji".)		
	First I touch the ground by my forehead, then elbows, then palms. Then I lift my forehead, then elbows, then palms.	Nejdřív se dotknu země čelem, pak lokty, a pak dlaněmi. Potom zvednu čelo, pak lokty, a pak dlaně.
(The teacher says that right at the time when he himself does it.)		
	When we thanked the Buddha by bowing down, we thank Him by word.	Po tom co jsme poděkovali Buddhovi poklonou, poděkujeme mu slovem.
	So, we will now recite a sentence in the Buddha's language.	Takže teď budeme recitovat větu v jazyce Buddhyy.
(The teacher asks a child.)	What language do you speak?	Jakým jazykem mluvíš?
Child	In Czech.	Česky.
Teacher	Great! The Buddha didn't speak in Czech. He didn't speak in English either. The Buddha spoke in the Pāli language.	Výborně! Buddha nemluvil česky. Nemluvil ani anglicky. Buddha mluvil v jazyce Pāli.
	The meaning of what we will recite is this:	Co budeme teď recitovat, znamená tohle:
	I bow to Him, exalted, freed, and rightly and completely Enlightened.	Klaním se jemu, vznešenému, oproštěnému, správně a zcela osvícenému.
	"Exalted" means, that He was above and free from the problems of the world. "Freed" means, that He had no greed, hatred, and ignorance. "Enlightened" means, that He understood the reality of the body and mind.	"Vznešený" znamená, že byl povznešený nad problémy světa, osvobozený z problémů světa. "Oproštěný" znamená, že neměl žádnou chamtivost, nenávisť, a zaslepenost. "Osvícený" znamená, že porozuměl skutečnosti těla a mysli.
	Alright, so, repeat after me.	Dobře, tak po mě opakujte.
	<i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i> <i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i> <i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i>	<i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i> <i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i> <i>Namo – tassa – bhaga – vato – ara – hato – sammā – sam – buddhassa.</i>
(The teacher recites by two syllables and the children repeat every two syllables right after the teacher.)		
	Very well! May you all be always happy and healthy!	Výborně! Kéž jste všichni vždycky šťastní a zdraví!

2. Eating Meditation

In *Theravāda Buddhism*, there are forty (40) meditation objects that are practiced with the purpose to arouse concentration, stability of mind, called in Pāḷi language "*samathabhāvanā*". We can find them listed in Visuddhimagga¹ in Pāḷi language, and in Mahāsi Sayadaw's "*Purpose of Practising Kammaṭṭhāna Meditation*", p.7 (PDF p.9). The list of Mahāsi Sayadaw is nice and neat, so let's look at it.²

Enumeration by group

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|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Kasina</i> (10) | 4. <i>Brahmavihāra</i> (4) | 7. <i>Catu-dhātu-vavatthāna</i> (1) |
| 2. <i>Asubha</i> (10) | 5. <i>Āruppa</i> (4) | |
| 3. <i>Anussati</i> (10) | 6. <i>Āhāre Paṭikūlasaṁbhā</i> (1) | |

Enumeration in detail

THE TEN TYPES OF KASINA ARE: 1. Earth kasina (*paṭhavīkasinaṃ*), 2. Water kasina (*āpokasinaṃ*), 3. Fire kasina (*tejokasinaṃ*), 4. Wind kasina (*vāyokasinaṃ*), 5. Brownish or deep purplish blue kasina (*nīlakasinaṃ*), 6. Yellow kasina (*pītakasinaṃ*), 7. Red kasina (*lohitakasinaṃ*), 8. White kasina (*odātakasinaṃ*), 9. Light kasina (*ālokakasinaṃ*), 10. Open air-space, sky kasina (*ākāsakasinaṃ*).

THE TEN ASUBHAS ARE AS FOLLOWS: 11. Swollen or bloated corpse (*uddhumātakaṃ*), 12. A corpse brownish black or purplish blue with decay (*vinīlakaṃ*), 13. A festering or suppurated corpse (*vipubbakaṃ*), 14. A corpse splattered half or fissured from decay (*vicchiddakaṃ*), 15. A corpse gnawed by animals such as wild dogs and foxes (*vikkhāyittakaṃ*), 16. A corpse scattered in parts, hands, legs, head and body being dispersed (*vikkhitakaṃ*), 17. A corpse cut and thrown away in parts after killing (*hatavikkhittakaṃ*), 18. A bleeding corpse, i.e. with red blood oozing out (*lohitakaṃ*), 19. A corpse infested with and eaten by worms (*puḷuvakaṃ*), 20. Remains of a corpse in a heap of bones, i.e. skeleton (*aṭṭhikaṃ*).

THE TEN ANUSSATIS ARE: 21. Fixing the mind with attentiveness and reflecting repeatedly on the glorious virtues and attributes of Buddha (*buddhānussati*), 22. Reflecting with serious attentiveness repeatedly on the virtues and qualities of Buddha's teachings and his doctrine (*dharmānussati*), 23. Fixing the mind strongly and repeatedly upon the rare attributes and sanctity of the Sanghās (*saṅghānussati*), 24. Reflecting seriously and repeatedly on the purification of one's own morality or sīla (*sīlānussati*), 25. Repeatedly reflecting on the mind's purity in the noble act of one's own dāna, charitableness and liberality (*cāgānussati*), 26. Reflecting with serious and repeated attention on one's own complete possession of the qualities of saddhā, absolute faith, sīla, morality, suta; knowledge, cāga, liberality and pannā, wisdom or knowledge just as the devas have, to enable one to be reborn in the World of devas (*devatānussati*), 27. Reflecting repeatedly with serious attentiveness on the supreme spiritual blissful state of Nirvana (*upasamānussati*), 28. Recollection of death or reflecting repeatedly on the inevitability of death (*marañānussati*), 29. Reflecting earnestly and repeatedly on the impurity of the body which is composed of

¹ Visuddhimagga - 3. Kammaṭṭhānaggahaṇaniddeso - Cattālisakammaṭṭhānavaṇṇanā (MM vol.1 p.106)

² I have made minor edits and corrections to the text. I have also adjusted the formatting to save space.

the detestable 32 constituents such as hair, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, etc. (*kāyagatā-sati*), **30**. Repeated reflection on the inhaled and exhaled breath (*ānāpāna-sati*).

THE FOUR *BRAHMAVIHĀRAS* ARE: **31**. Contemplation of loving kindness and goodwill or universal benevolence towards all sentient beings, praying "may all beings be happy." (*mettā*), **32**. Contemplation, of compassion, i.e. pity for and sympathy with those who are suffering praying in mind that "may all beings be free from misery and suffering." (*karuṇā*), **33**. Contemplation of feeling of rejoicing with others in their happiness or prosperity praying in mind that they "may continue to be happy and prosperous as at present with out diminution (*muditā*), **34**. To remain indifferent with a feeling of equanimity to the state of condition of all beings, bearing an impartial attitude that things happen according to one's own kamma that has been committed. (*upekkhā*).

THE FOUR *ĀRUPPAS* ARE: **35**. Meditation or fixing the mind intently on the realm of infinity of space, sky *paññā* (*ākāśānañcāyatanaṃ*), **36**. Meditation or fixing the mind intently on the realm of infinity of consciousness, *pathamā ruppavinnāna* (*viññāṇaṇcāyatanaṃ*), **37**. Meditation or dwelling the mind intently on Nothingness, i.e. nothingness, that remains or exists from *pathamāruppavinnāna* (*ākīñcaññāyatanaṃ*), **38**. Meditation on the realm of Neither-perception nor Non-perception, i.e. semi-conscious state *Jhāna's* perception *Tatiya* (third) *ruppavinnāna* as "so calm, tranquil and gentle." (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatanaṃ*).

39. *Āhāre paṭikūlasaññā*: means the consciousness or perception of the impurity of material food derived from fixing the mind intently on the food and eatables as being detestable.

40. *Catudhātuvavatthānaṃ*: means contemplation on the existence or composition of the main four elements of *dhātu* in the body, namely, *paṭhavī* (earth), *āpo* (water), *tejo* (fire), *vāyo* (air or wind) and their differences in nature.

As we can see, the meditation on food is included in these forty, bearing the number 39. Meditation on food, namely "perception of repulsiveness in food" (*āhāre paṭikūlasaññā*) has been suggested by the Buddha many, many times. I have found over thirty-five occurrences in the *Sutta Piṭaka*, the oldest Pāli texts we have today.³ Most often it is mentioned along with other "perceptions", namely "perception of repulsiveness (in one's body)" (*asubhasaññā*), "perception of death" (*marasaññā*), "perception of drawbacks (in sensual pleasures)" (*ādinavasāññā*), "perception of disenchantment (in one's five aggregates)" (*anabhiratasaññā*), and others. It is explained in detail in the related chapter of

³ Specifically, see these places: *DN 3.11. Dasuttara S. – Navadhammā & Dasadhammā, MN 1.5.10. Māratajjaniya S., SN 5.2.8.3. Āhārepaṭikūla S., AN 1.18. Aparāccharāsaṅghātavaggo (par. 455 & 467), AN 4 4.2(17).3. Asubha S., AN 4 4.2(17).9. Sasaṅkhāra S., AN 5 2.2(7).1. Paṭhamasaññā S., AN 5 2.2(7).2. Dutiyasaññā S., AN 5 2.2(7). 9. Nibbidā S., AN 5 2.2(7).10. Āsavakkhaya S., AN 5 2.3(8).1. Paṭhamacetovimutti-phala S., AN 5.3.3(13).1. Gilāna S., AN 5 3.3(13).2. Satisūpaṭṭhita S., AN 5 3(29). Rāgaṭṭhāna, AN 7.5.5. Paṭhamasaññā S., AN 7.5.5. Dutiyasaññā S. (explains that it leads to Enlightenment), AN 7.11. Rāgaṭṭhāna – par. 625, AN 9.2.6. Saññā S., AN 9.2.5(10). Rāgaṭṭhāna, AN 10.2.1(6).6. Paṭhamasaññā S., AN 10.2.1(6).7. Dutiyasaññā S., AN 10 5.2(22).23. Rāgaṭṭhāna (par. 237 & 238).*

Visuddhimagga.⁴ The information of *Visuddhimagga* is so eloquent, that I would like to present it here. This citation comes from ven. Ñāṇamoli's "*Path of Purification*", published by Buddhist Publication Society in 2010 (first edition 1956), and distributed by accesstoinight.org as a copyrightless book. See pp.337-344 (PDF pp.395-402) extracted and attached at the end of this document.

My Practice

As I have promised to several students of mine, I will explain the practice of perceiving repulsiveness in food according to my own practice and experience. I believe that this practice is very helpful on the way toward Enlightenment, and that it may support one's mindfulness. I have also found out, that eating and defecating – being the occasions of numerous inventions and discoveries in the past and the modern world – are the best times for thinking, and the most challenging times for mindfulness. This might be so to support procreation. Indeed, if one eats and defecates mindfully, they will soon realize the nature of this body, and possibly purify their mind of lust. A mind purified of lust is a condition for Enlightenment and noble psychic powers (such as levitation, telekinesis, telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc.). It is however incapable of desire for procreation. (So the psychics in Harry Potter either didn't have "noble" psychic powers, or they can't have a real counterpart in our reality.)

There are three aspects to follow and three places to observe when eating.

Three aspects

1. Mindfulness (the yogi observes the three places of eating in the present moment, as they happen, and also the mindfulness itself – to ensure that the mindfulness is still present.)
2. Relaxation (the yogi has relaxed his/her body throughout the time of eating)
3. Thorough chewing of the food (the yogi chews the food in his/her mouth until there is nothing more to chew, and only then he/she swallows)

Three places

1. Tongue (the movements of the tongue as it serves the food to the teeth, as it cleans the oral cavity (i.e. mouth), and as it allows the chewed food flow by its sides)
2. Teeth (the lower jaw's beating the upper jaw, the simple movement up and down, and the fact that it doesn't change its shape. The fact that the upper jaw is just receiving the merciless blows of the lower jaw should be particularly observed. It might be helpful to google "masseter" and look at the placement and function of the most powerful muscle in the human's body, the chewing muscle.)
3. Lips (the mouth-enclosing task, protecting the food from falling out of the oral cavity, and also the function of cleaning the food stuck between the teeth and the muscles around lips.)

Before a yogi eats, it is necessary to relax all the muscles throughout their body, from the top of the head to the tips of the toes. Then they make the determination – "from now on I will be eating mindfully,

⁴ *Visuddhimagga* - 11. *Samādhiniddeso* - *Āhārepaṭikkūlabhāvanā* (MM vol.1 p.335).

relaxed, and chew thoroughly every mouthful." (It is also possible to reflect on the repulsiveness of food by the poem suggested by *Visuddhimagga*.⁵) The yogi is well aware that they will observe the body, not the mind. (Indeed, to be able to understand repulsiveness of food, it is necessary to observe the body as repulsive. Observing mind will not lead to understanding of repulsiveness of food.) The yogi then observes how their hands and body move in order to deliver the food to the oral cavity. They may notice how the trunk inconspicuously bends toward the alms-bowl/plate, how their head lowers down, or perhaps even sticks out in front, how their hand holds the spoon, how the elbow and fore-arm move the hand holding the spoon/handful toward their mouth, and anything else that is related to the bodily characteristics or movement, prominent at that moment. The moment of inserting the food in one's mouth is crucial, and perhaps most spectacular of all. I find the movement of lips, teeth, and tongue, together with the head, as well as the movement of the hands and the body, particularly interesting during the moment of inserting food in the mouth. Sometimes, of course, this spectacular synchronization is not accurate, hence some food falls here and there. This is one of the good reasons to eat mindfully – even if you are keen on procreation.

When the food enters the oral cavity, the orchestra of eating starts and the yogi will easily fall into thinking. It is possible to stop after swallowing each mouthful when mindfulness was lost and relax whole body one time again. This will gradually create a subconscious need to be mindful, and thinking during meals will gradually cease. (Of course, the repeated relaxation is not to be followed if you have 10 minutes to eat and then dash to catch your airplane. I am talking about mindful eating during a meditation retreat or a peaceful day.) Each mouthful is chewed with mindfulness in the oral cavity, and also in the pharynx,⁶ esophagus,⁷ and stomach at the time of swallowing the chewed food. With a really sharp concentration it might be possible to perceive the smell of stomach and even the intestines. Only when the process of swallowing is no more perceptible it is appropriate to take a new spoonful/handful.

This practice is followed with the intention to understand the reality of the body, namely – impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, repulsiveness, uncontrollability, and not-self. There are altogether eleven characteristics to observe in all five aggregates:⁸

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Impermanent (<i>aniccato</i>) | 5. Dart (<i>sallato</i>) | 9. Disintegrating (<i>palokato</i>) |
| 2. Unsatisfactory (<i>dukkhato</i>) | 6. Evil (<i>aghatō</i>) | 10. Empty (<i>suññato</i>) |
| 3. Sick (<i>rogato</i>) | 7. Disease (<i>ābādhato</i>) | 11. Not-Self (<i>anattato</i>) |
| 4. Tumour (<i>gaṇḍato</i>) | 8. Alien (<i>parato</i>) | |

⁵ See ven. Ñāṇamoli's "*Path of Purification*", p.343.

⁶ I.e. the tube that leads the food from the back of the mouth to the place where it divides into the breathing and digesting tract.

⁷ The tube through which the food passes right into the stomach.

⁸ Five aggregates (*pañcakkhandhā*) are the constituents of a living being. Namely, (1) body (*rūpakkhandha*), (2) feelings/sensations (*vedanākkhandha*), (3) perceptions (*saññākkhandha*), (4) intentions/volitions (*saṅkhārakkhandha*), and (5) consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandha*).

Reflecting on each and every aggregate of this five-fold existence one may attain Enlightenment, from Stream-Entry (*Sotāpatti*) until Arahant hood. In fact, this is how ven. Sāriputta, the wisest disciple of the Buddha who ever lived in this dispensation, attained Arahant hood.⁹

May all beings be happy and healthy ☺

monk Saraṇa

⁹ See *MN 74. Dīghanakha Sutta*.

VISUDDHIMAGGA

THE PATH OF PURIFICATION



The Classic Manual of Buddhist Doctrine and Meditation

Translated from the Pali by
Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli

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CHAPTER XI

CONCENTRATION—CONCLUSION: NUTRIMENT AND THE ELEMENTS

(*Samādhi-niddesa*)

[PERCEPTION OF REPULSIVENESS IN NUTRIMENT]

1. [341] Now comes the description of the development of the perception of repulsiveness in nutriment, which was listed as the “one perception”¹ next to the immaterial states (III.105).

Herein, it nourishes (*āharati*, lit. “brings on”), thus it is nutriment (*āhāra*, lit. “bringing on”). That is of four kinds as: physical nutriment, nutriment consisting of contact, nutriment consisting of mental volition, and nutriment consisting of consciousness.²

1. “The word ‘perception’ (*saññā*) is used for the *dhmma* with the characteristic of perceiving (*sañjānana*), as in the case of ‘perception of visible objects,’ ‘perception of sound,’ etc.; and it is used for insight, as in the case of ‘perception of impermanence,’ ‘perception of suffering,’ etc.; and it is used for serenity, as in the passage, ‘Perception of the bloated and perception of visible objects, have these one meaning or different meanings, Sopāka?’ (*Source untraced*. Cf. III.111), and so on. Here, however, it should be understood as the preliminary work for serenity; for it is the apprehending of the repulsive aspect in nutriment, or the access *jhāna* produced by means of that, that is intended here by, ‘perception of repulsiveness in nutriment’” (Vism-mhṭ 334–35).

2. A more detailed exposition of nutriment is given at M-a I 107ff. “‘It nourishes’ (*āharati*)”: the meaning is that it leads up, fetches, produces, its own fruit through its state as a condition for the fruit’s arising or presence, which state is called “nutriment condition.” It is made into a mouthful (*kabalaṃ karīyati*), thus it is physical (*kabalīṅkāra*). In this way it gets its designation from the concrete object; but as to characteristic, it should be understood to have the characteristic of nutritive essence (*ojā*). It is physical and it is nutriment in the sense stated, thus it is physical nutriment; so with the rest. It touches (*phusati*), thus it is contact (*phassa*); for although this is an immaterial state, it occurs also as the aspect of touching on an object (*ārammaṇa*—lit. “what is to be leaned on”), which is why it is said to have the characteristic of touching. It wills (*cetayati*), thus it is volition (*cetanā*); the meaning is that it arranges (collects) itself together with associated states upon the object. Mental volition is volition occupied with the mind. It cognizes (*viñānāti*) by conjecturing about rebirth (see XVII.303), thus it is consciousness (*viññāṇa* = cognition) (Vism-mhṭ 335).

2. But what is it here that nourishes (brings on) what? Physical nutriment (*kabalīṅkārāhāra*) nourishes (brings on) the materiality of the octad that has nutritive essence as eighth;³ contact as nutriment nourishes (brings on) the three kinds of feeling; mental volition as nutriment nourishes (brings on) rebirth-linking in the three kinds of becoming; consciousness as nutriment nourishes (brings on) mentality-materiality at the moment of rebirth-linking.

3. Now, when there is physical nutriment there is attachment, which brings peril; when there is nutriment as contact there is approaching, which brings peril; when there is nutriment as mental volition there is rebirth-linking, which brings peril.⁴ And to show how they bring fear thus, physical nutriment should be illustrated by the simile of the child's flesh (S II 98), contact as nutriment by the simile of the hideless cow (S II 99), mental volition as nutriment by the simile of the pit of live coals (S II 99), and consciousness as nutriment by the simile of the hundred spears (S II 100).

4. But of these four kinds of nutriment it is only physical nutriment, classed as what is eaten, drunk, chewed, and tasted, that is intended here as “nutriment” in this sense. The perception arisen as the apprehension of the repulsive aspect in that nutriment is, “perception of repulsiveness in nutriment.”

3. For the “octad with nutritive essence as eighth” (*ojatṭhamaka*), see XVIII.5ff. and XX.27ff.

4. *Vism-mhṭ* (p. 355) explains *attachment* here as craving which is “perilous because it brings harm” (see e.g. D II 58–59), or in other words, “greed for the five aggregates (lust after five-aggregate experience).” It cites the following: “Bhikkhus, when there is physical nutriment, there is greed (lust), there is delighting, there is craving; consciousness being planted therein grows. Wherever consciousness being planted grows, there is the combination of mind-and-matter. Wherever there is the combination of mind-and-matter, there is ramification of formations. Wherever there is ramification of formations, there is production of further becoming in the future. Wherever there is production of further becoming in the future, there is future birth, aging and death. Wherever there is future birth, aging and death, bhikkhus, the end is sorrow, I say, with woe and despair” (S II 101; cf. S II 66). *Approaching* is explained as “meeting, coinciding, with unabandoned perversions [of perception] due to an object [being perceived as permanent, etc., when it is not].” That is, “perilous since it is not free from the three kinds of suffering.” The quotation given is: “Bhikkhus, due to contact of the kind to be felt as pleasant, pleasant feeling arises. With that feeling as condition there is craving, ... thus there is the arising of this whole mass of suffering” (cf. S IV 215). *Reappearance* is “rebirth in some kind of becoming or other. Being flung into a new becoming is perilous because there is no immunity from the risks rooted in reappearance.” The following is quoted: “Not knowing, bhikkhus, a man forms the formation of merit, and his [rebirth] consciousness accords with the merit [tie performed]; he forms the formation of demerit; ... he forms the formation of the imperturbable ...” (S II 82). *Rebirth-linking* is the actual linking with the next becoming, which “is perilous since it is not immune from the suffering due to the signs of [the impending] rebirth-linking.” The quotation given is: “Bhikkhus, when there is consciousness as nutriment there is greed (lust), there is delighting ...” (S II 102—complete as above).

5. One who wants to develop that perception of repulsiveness in nutriment should learn the meditation subject and see that he has no uncertainty about even a single word of what he has learnt. Then he should go into solitary retreat and [342] review repulsiveness in ten aspects in the physical nutriment classified as what is eaten, drunk, chewed, and tasted, that is to say, as to going, seeking, using, secretion, receptacle, what is uncooked (undigested), what is cooked (digested), fruit, outflow, and smearing.

6. 1. Herein, *as to going*: even when a man has gone forth in so mighty a dispensation, still after he has perhaps spent all night reciting the Enlightened One's word or doing the ascetic's work, after he has risen early to do the duties connected with the shrine terrace and the Enlightenment-tree terrace, to set out the water for drinking and washing, to sweep the grounds and to see to the needs of the body, after he has sat down on his seat and given attention to his meditation subject twenty or thirty times⁵ and got up again, then he must take his bowl and [outer] robe, he must leave behind the ascetics' woods that are not crowded with people, offer the bliss of seclusion, possess shade and water, and are clean, cool, delightful places, he must disregard the Noble Ones' delight in seclusion, and he must set out for the village in order to get nutriment, as a jackal for the charnel ground.

7. And as he goes thus, from the time when he steps down from his bed or chair he has to tread on a carpet⁶ covered with the dust of his feet, geckos' droppings, and so on. Next he has to see the doorstep,⁷ which is more repulsive than the inside of the room since it is often fouled with the droppings of rats, bats,⁸ and so on. Next the lower terrace, which is more repulsive than the terrace above since it is all smeared with the droppings of owls, pigeons,⁹ and so on. Next the grounds,¹⁰ which are more repulsive than the lower floor since they are defiled by old grass and leaves blown about by the wind, by sick novices' urine, excrement, spittle and snot, and in the rainy season by water, mud, and so on. And he has to see the road to the monastery, which is more repulsive than the grounds.

5. “‘Twenty or thirty times’: here some say that the definition of the number of times is according to what is present-by-continuity (see XIV.188). But others say that it is by way of “warming up the seat” (see M-a I 255); for development that has not reached suppression of hindrances does not remove the bodily discomfort in the act of sitting, because of the lack of pervading happiness. So there is inconstancy of posture too. Then ‘twenty or thirty’ is taken as the number already observed by the time of setting out on the alms round. Or alternatively, from ‘going’ up to ‘smearing’ is one turn; then it is after giving attention to the meditation subject by twenty or thirty turns in this way” (Vism-mhṭ 339).

6. *Paccattharaṇa*—“carpet”: the word normally means a coverlet, but here, according to Vism-mhṭ, (p. 339) it is, “a spread (*attharaṇa*) consisting of a rug (*cilimika*) to be spread on the ground for protecting the skin.”

7. For *pamukha*—“doorstep,” perhaps an open upper floor gallery here, see XIII.6.

8. *Jatukā*—“bat” = *khuddaka-vaggulī* (Vism-mhṭ 339): not in PED; see XIII.97.

9. *Pārāvata*—“pigeon”: only spelling *pārāpata* given in PED.

10. For this meaning of *pariveṇa* see Ch. IV, note 37.

8. In due course, after standing in the debating lodge¹¹ when he has finished paying homage at the Enlightenment Tree and the shrine, he sets out thinking, “Instead of looking at the shrine that is like a cluster of pearls, and the Enlightenment Tree that is as lovely as a bouquet of peacock’s tail feathers, and the abode that is as fair as a god’s palace, I must now turn my back on such a charming place and go abroad for the sake of food;” and on the way to the village, the view of a road of stumps and thorns and an uneven road broken up by the force of water awaits him.

9. Next, after he has put on his waist cloth as one who hides an abscess, and tied his waist band as one who ties a bandage on a wound, and robed himself in his upper robes as one who hides a skeleton, and taken out his bowl as one who takes out a pan for medicine, [343] when he reaches the vicinity of the village gate, perhaps the sight of an elephant’s carcass, a horse’s carcass, a buffalo’s carcass, a human carcass, a snake’s carcass, or a dog’s carcass awaits him, and not only that, but he has to suffer his nose to be assailed by the smell of them.

Next, as he stands in the village gateway, he must scan the village streets in order to avoid danger from savage elephants, horses, and so on.

10. So this repulsive [experience] beginning with the carpet that has to be trodden on and ending with the various kinds of carcasses that have to be seen and smelled, [has to be undergone] for the sake of nutriment: “Oh, nutriment is indeed a repulsive thing!”

This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to going.

11. 2. How *as to seeking*? When he has endured the repulsiveness of going in this way, and has gone into the village, and is clothed in his cloak of patches, he has to wander in the village streets from house to house like a beggar with a dish in his hand. And in the rainy season wherever he treads his feet sink into water and mire up to the flesh of the calves.¹² He has to hold the bowl in one hand and his robe up with the other. In the hot season he has to go about with his body covered with the dirt, grass, and dust blown about by the wind. On reaching such and such a house door he has to see and even to tread in gutters and cesspools covered with blue-bottles and seething with all the species of worms, all mixed up with fish washings, meat washings, rice washings, spittle, snot, dogs’ and pigs’ excrement, and what not, from which flies come up and settle on his outer cloak of patches and on his bowl and on his head.

12. And when he enters a house, some give and some do not. And when they give, some give yesterday’s cooked rice and stale cakes and rancid jelly, sauce and so on.¹³ Some, not giving, say, “Please pass on, venerable sir,” others keep

11. *Vitakka-mālaka*—“debating lodge”: *Vism-mhṭ* (p. 339) says: “‘*Kattha nu kho ajja bhikkhāya caritabban’ ti ādinā vitakkamāḷake*” (“in a lodge for thinking in the way beginning ‘Where must I go for alms today?’”).

12. *Piṇḍika-mañsa*—“flesh of the calves” = *jaṅghapiṇḍikaṃamsapadesa*. (*Vism-mhṭ* 340) Cf. VIII.97; also A-a 417. Not in this sense in PED.

13. *Kummāsa*—“jelly”: usually rendered “junket,” but the Vinaya commentaries give it as made of corn (*yava*).

silent as if they did not see him. Some avert their faces. Others treat him with harsh words such as: “Go away, you bald-head.” When he has wandered for alms in the village in this way like a beggar, he has to depart from it.

13. So this [experience] beginning with the entry into the village and ending with the departure from it, which is repulsive owing to the water, mud, etc., that has to be trodden in and seen and endured, [has to be undergone] for the sake of nutriment: “Oh, nutriment is indeed a repulsive thing!”

This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to seeking. [344]

14. 3. How *as to using*? After he has sought the nutriment in this way and is sitting at ease in a comfortable place outside the village, then so long as he has not dipped his hand into it he would be able to invite a respected bhikkhu or a decent person, if he saw one, [to share it]; but as soon as he has dipped his hand into it out of desire to eat he would be ashamed to say, “Take some.” And when he has dipped his hand in and is squeezing it up, the sweat trickling down his five fingers wets any dry crisp food there may be and makes it sodden.

15. And when its good appearance has been spoilt by his squeezing it up, and it has been made into a ball and put into his mouth, then the lower teeth function as a mortar, the upper teeth as a pestle, and the tongue as a hand. It gets pounded there with the pestle of the teeth like a dog’s dinner in a dog’s trough, while he turns it over and over with his tongue; then the thin spittle at the tip of the tongue smears it, and the thick spittle behind the middle of the tongue smears it, and the filth from the teeth in the parts where a tooth-stick cannot reach smears it.

16. When thus mashed up and besmeared, this peculiar compound now destitute of the [original] colour and smell is reduced to a condition as utterly nauseating as a dog’s vomit in a dog’s trough. Yet, notwithstanding that it is like this, it can still be swallowed because it is no longer in range of the eye’s focus.

This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to using.

17. 4. How *as to secretion*? Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas and Wheel-turning Monarchs have only one of the four secretions consisting of bile, phlegm, pus and blood, but those with weak merit have all four. So when [the food] has arrived at the stage of being eaten and it enters inside, then in one whose secretion of bile is in excess it becomes as utterly nauseating as if smeared with thick *madhuka* oil; in one whose secretion of phlegm in excess it is as if smeared with the juice of *nāgabālā* leaves;¹⁴ in one whose secretion of pus is in excess it is as if smeared with rancid buttermilk; and in one whose secretion of blood is in excess it is as utterly nauseating as if smeared with dye. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to secretion.

18. 5. How *as to receptacle*? When it has gone inside the belly and is smeared with one of these secretions, then the receptacle it goes into is no gold dish or crystal or silver dish and so on. On the contrary, if it is swallowed by one ten years old, it finds itself in a place like a cesspit unwashed for ten years. [345] If it is swallowed by one twenty years old, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, eighty, ninety

14. *Nāgabālā*—a kind of plant; not in PED.

years old, if it is swallowed by one a hundred years old, it finds itself in a place like a cesspit unwashed for a hundred years. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to receptacle.

19. 6. How *as to what is uncooked (undigested)*? After this nutriment has arrived at such a place for its receptacle, then for as long as it remains uncooked it stays in that same place just described, which is shrouded in absolute darkness, pervaded by draughts,¹⁵ tainted by various smells of ordure and utterly fetid and loathsome. And just as when a cloud out of season has rained during a drought and bits of grass and leaves and rushes and the carcasses of snakes, dogs and human beings that have collected in a pit at the gate of an outcaste village remain there warmed by the sun's heat until the pit becomes covered with froth and bubbles, so too, what has been swallowed that day and yesterday and the day before remains there together, and being smothered by the layer of phlegm and covered with froth and bubbles produced by digestion through being fermented by the heat of the bodily fires, it becomes quite loathsome. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to what is uncooked.

20. 7. How *as to what is cooked*? When it has been completely cooked there by the bodily fires, it does not turn into gold, silver, etc., as the ores¹⁶ of gold, silver, etc., do [through smelting]. Instead, giving off froth and bubbles, it turns into excrement and fills the receptacle for digested food, like brown clay squeezed with a smoothing trowel and packed into a tube, and it turns into urine and fills the bladder. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to what is cooked.

21. 8. How *as to fruit*? When it has been rightly cooked, it produces the various kinds of ordure consisting of head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, and the rest. When wrongly cooked it produces the hundred diseases beginning with itch, ring-worm, smallpox, leprosy, plague, consumption, coughs, flux, and so on. Such is its fruit. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to fruit.

22. 9. How *as to outflow*? On being swallowed, it enters by one door, after which it flows out by several doors in the way beginning, "Eye-dirt from the eye, ear-dirt from the ear" (Sn 197). And on being swallowed it is swallowed even in the company of large gatherings. But on flowing out, now converted into excrement, urine, etc., it is excreted only in solitude. [346] On the first day one is delighted to eat it, elated and full of happiness and joy. On the second day one stops one's nose to void it, with a wry face, disgusted and dismayed. And on the first day one swallows it lustfully, greedily, gluttonously, infatuatedly. But on the second day, after a single night has passed, one excretes it with distaste, ashamed, humiliated and disgusted. Hence the Ancients said:

23. The food and drink so greatly prized—
 The crisp to chew, the soft to suck—
 Go in all by a single door,
 But by nine doors come oozing out.

15. *Pavana*—"draught": not in this sense in PED; see XVI.37.

16. *Dhātu*—"ore": not in this sense in PED. See also XV.20.

The food and drink so greatly prized—
 The crisp to chew, the soft to suck—
 Men like to eat in company,
 But to excrete in secrecy.

The food and drink so greatly prized—
 The crisp to chew, the soft to suck—
 These a man eats with high delight,
 And then excretes with dumb disgust.

The food and drink so greatly prized—
 The crisp to chew, the soft to suck—
 A single night will be enough
 To bring them to putridity.

This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to outflow.

24. 10. *How as to smearing?* At the time of using it he smears his hands, lips, tongue and palate, and they become repulsive by being smeared with it. And even when washed, they have to be washed again and again in order to remove the smell. And, just as, when rice is being boiled, the husks, the red powder covering the grain, etc., rise up and smear the mouth, rim and lid of the cauldron, so too, when eaten it rises up during its cooking and simmering by the bodily fire that pervades the whole body, it turns into tartar, which smears the teeth, and it turns into spittle, phlegm, etc., which respectively smear the tongue, palate, etc.; and it turns into eye-dirt, ear-dirt, snot, urine, excrement, etc., which respectively smear the eyes, ears, nose and nether passages. And when these doors are smeared by it, they never become either clean or pleasing even though washed every day. And after one has washed a certain one of these, the hand has to be washed again.¹⁷ And after one has washed a certain one of these, the repulsiveness does not depart from it even after two or three washings with cow dung and clay and scented powder. This is how repulsiveness should be reviewed as to smearing.

25. As he reviews repulsiveness in this way in ten aspects and strikes at it with thought and applied thought, physical nutriment [347] becomes evident to him in its repulsive aspect. He cultivates that sign¹⁸ again and again, develops and

17. "'A certain one' is said with reference to the anal orifice. But those who are scrupulously clean by nature wash their hands again after washing the mouth, and so on" (Vism-mhṭ 342).

18. "'That sign': that object as the sign for development, which sign is called *physical nutriment* and has appeared in the repulsive aspect to one who gives his attention to it repeatedly in the ways already described. And there, while development occurs through the repulsive aspect, it is only the dhammas on account of which there comes to be the concept of physical nutriment that are repulsive, not the concept. But it is because the occurrence of development is contingent only upon dhammas with an individual essence, and because the profundity is due to that actual individual essence of dhammas that have individual essences, that the jhāna cannot reach absorption in it through apprehension of the repulsive aspect. For it is owing to profundity that the first pair of truths is hard to see" (Vism-mhṭ 342–43).

repeatedly practices it. As he does so, the hindrances are suppressed, and his mind is concentrated in access concentration, but without reaching absorption because of the profundity of physical nutriment as a state with an individual essence. But perception is evident here in the apprehension of the repulsive aspect, which is why this meditation subject goes by the name of “perception of repulsiveness in nutriment.”

26. When a bhikkhu devotes himself to this perception of repulsiveness in nutriment, his mind retreats, retracts and recoils from craving for flavours. He nourishes himself with nutriment without vanity and only for the purpose of crossing over suffering, as one who seeks to cross over the desert eats his own dead child’s flesh (S II 98). Then his greed for the five cords of sense desire comes to be fully understood without difficulty by means of the full understanding of the physical nutriment. He fully understands the materiality aggregate by means of the full-understanding of the five cords of sense desire. Development of mindfulness occupied with the body comes to perfection in him through the repulsiveness of “what is uncooked” and the rest. He has entered upon a way that is in conformity with the perception of foulness. And by keeping to this way, even if he does not experience the deathless goal in this life, he is at least bound for a happy destiny.

This is the detailed explanation of the development of the perception of repulsiveness in nutriment.

[DEFINING OF THE ELEMENTS: WORD DEFINITIONS]

27. Now comes the description of the development of the definition of the four elements, which was listed as the “one defining” next to the perception of repulsiveness in nutriment (III.105).

Herein, “defining” (*vavatthāna*) is determining by characterizing individual essences.¹⁹ [The compound] *catudhātu vavatthāna* (“four-element defining”) is [resolvable into] *catunnaṃ dhātūnaṃ vavatthānaṃ* (“defining of the four elements”). “Attention given to elements,” “the meditation subject consisting of elements” and “defining of the four elements” all mean the same thing.

This is given in two ways: in brief and in detail. It is given in brief in the Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta (D II 294), and in detail in the Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta (M I 185), the Rāhulovāda Sutta (M I 421), and the Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta (M III 240).

19. “‘By characterizing individual essences’: by making certain (*upadhāraṇa*) of the specific characteristics of hardness, and so on. For this meditation subject does not consist in the observing of a mere concept, as in the case of the earth kasiṇa as a meditation subject, neither does it consist in the observing of the colour blue, etc., as in the case of the blue kasiṇa as a meditation subject, nor in the observing of the general characteristics of impermanence, etc., in formations, as in the case of insight as a meditation subject; but rather it consists in the observing of the individual essences of earth, and so on. That is why ‘by characterizing individual essences’ is said, which means, ‘by making certain of the specific characteristics of hardness, and so on’ (Vism-mhṭ 344).